

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is this your first YMCA Long Course YMCA Nationals? Getting ready for Nationals can be very exciting, but also nerve-wracking because it's unlike any other competition you've competed in. Here are some frequently asked questions that might help you prepare...

Where is the Meet located?

The 2018 Long Course YMCA National Championship this year will be held in Eppley Recreation Center on the campus of the University of Maryland. This is the first recent year for this venue. The last time YMCA Long Course Nationals were held at the University of Maryland was in 2010.

How many YMCA's are represented?

Typically, around 110-140 teams attend from 25 states.

The team size ranges from 1 swimmer to approximately 30+ swimmers

How many swimmers attend YMCA Nationals?

Typically, around 900 to 1,300 swimmers

What is a typical day like?

Depending on your team size and whether you travel as a team or individually, this may vary...

For small teams (1-5), which surprisingly there are over 50 teams with fewer than 5 swimmers, you're likely to have a less busy schedule. You may not be swimming in Prelims every day, and/or just swim Time Trials. On the days you just swim Time Trials, you probably won't be going to Finals, unless you want to watch or cheer on another teammate.

For medium sized teams (~10-15) your schedule will most likely be similar to the larger team. But, it depends on whether or not your team has Finals qualifiers. Some team members will swim in Prelims and others might just swim Time Trials. While the Time Trial swimmers might come in a bit later during Prelims to warm up or cheer on their team. The Prelim swimmers will head back to the hotel, unless if they're swimming in Time Trials too, in which case they will stay a few more hours. Depending whether or not your team makes Finals, you'll most likely head back to the pool to swim or support your teammates.

For large teams (20+), you may be at the pool almost all day. Prelims will be in the morning, usually until noon. If you are also competing in Time Trials, you will be there a few more hours, but it actually runs pretty quickly (about 2 hrs). If you're just swimming Prelims, you may go back to the hotel after Prelims to rest up and eat lunch for a few hours. Time Trial swimmers will also have some downtime before Finals. Most large teams usually have swimmers competing in Finals, so it's likely you'll come back as a team for Finals either to swim or support your teammates.

What does the facility provide?

The Natatorium is located in the Eppley Recreation Center on the campus of the University of Maryland. The Natatorium has 2 pools: 50-meter competition pool (8 lanes) and 25 yard warm-up/warm-down pool (10 lanes). There are starting blocks at both ends of the competition pool with track start fins. Here are some pictures to get an idea of what the facility looks like.



(refer to page 4 of link for layout of the Natatorium)

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/nats/2018LC/Maps.pdf>

What is the Athlete's Village?

Because there is limited space, the pool deck becomes extremely crowded if all the swimmers are on deck at the same time. The Athlete's Village is located in the West Gym of the Eppley Recreation Center (attached below is a link to a map of the area on page 2 and 3). The Athlete's Village is like a huge gym! It's divided up into sections for teams, so everyone gets their own space. Make sure you bring chairs or something to sit on. Please remember everyone is responsible for their own personal belongings and they should not be left unattended. Also, parents, or anyone else without a bag tag, are not allowed to enter so make sure you always

carry your bag tag on you. In the Athlete's Village, swimmers will be able to hear the announcer so that they can keep track of the current events/heats.

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/nats/2018LC/Maps.pdf>

What are bag tags?

The bag tags let you enter the pool area and the Athlete's Village. It lets Security know you are a competing athlete, so have your bag tag on you at all times, or you can't get on deck. If you lose your bag tag, contact the Security person at the swimmer's entrance to the pool

How is Long Course Nationals different from Short Course Nationals?

The competition pool is 50 meters and contains 8 lanes. To make the meet run faster, there are chase starts. Chase starts are run at both ends of the pool. When the swimmer in the water is almost done with their race (about 15 meters to the finish), the swimmer in the next heat at the opposite end of the pool will dive in. So odd and even number heats will always be at opposite ends of the pool. Only 50-meter events are run at the same end.

How many swimmers make it into Finals?

For individual races, they take the top 24 from Prelims (A, B, C Final heats). Top 8 (A) receive medals, 9-16 (B) receive ribbons.

For relays, they take the top 16 from prelims (A, B Final heats). Top 8 (A) receive medals and 9-16 (B) receive ribbons. For long distance events, 800 and 1500, the top 8 seeded swimmers will swim in Finals, everyone else is in Prelims.

What are Finals like?

Finals usually has an hour warm up, and before the meet starts there are swimmer-led devotions, the National Anthem and sometimes a few special recognitions. For individual events the first two heats (C, B) swim, and then the final heat (A) is called out and each swimmer is given a brief mention. After the A final swims awards are presented to the 1st through 16th places. For relays, it is similar, just there are only two heats (B, A). Be aware that Finals moves quickly and make sure you watch the events if you're swimming. In the end, Finals are very exciting, and an honor to qualify for. We encourage you to attend Finals even if you or a teammate not competing. The audience is always on their feet and it's an amazing experience!

What are Time Trials?

Time Trials is the session following prelims. It typically runs from 12:30PM to 2:30PM. It is another chance to swim an event again or a chance to swim an event that you don't have a national cut in. You can only enter a maximum of 2-time trial events and each event costs \$20. However, there is a possible chance for a 3rd time trial if there is enough time available. Depending on how quickly or slowly Prelims is moving, they may have to change the warm up for Time Trials.

Typically, there is a 30 min warm up for Time Trials, but if it's cut short there is still the warm up pool. Time Trials runs pretty quickly, so make sure you are watching the events. Time Trials is a great experience to swim fast and get best times.

How many individual events may I enter and how many may I swim?

You can enter any number of events where you have the qualifying time in the championship meet, but you are allowed to swim up to five individual events. If you enter more than five individual events, then you must scratch down to five. It is important that you and your coach work together for your benefit and your teams benefit.

What are the Bonus/Additional Events?

If you qualify for an event in the 100-meter or 200-meter butterfly, backstroke, or breaststroke, you automatically qualify for the 50 meter event of that stroke. However, this does not apply to freestyle; you must meet the time standard to compete in the 50-meter freestyle. The 50-meter event of that stroke counts as an individual event, so just remember you can only swim five individual events.

If you qualify for the 800-meter or 1500-meter freestyle, you may swim both event(s) if you meet the bonus standard. For example, if you qualify for the 800, but not the 1500, you can also swim the 1500 too if you meet the bonus cut, which is slower than the actual qualifying time. Qualifying and Bonus standards are listed in the link below.

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/nats/2018LC/2018LongCourseQualifyingTimeswithBonus.pdf>

What if it thunders?

Since this Nationals is located in an area common to thunderstorms in the summer, the meet may be delayed due to thunder and lightning. Depending on how delayed the meet is, time trials may be shortened or cancelled.

Other things to know...

There are world and national level officials working this meet - of course no one wants you to get disqualified, but just know that these are some of the best officials in the world. Whether you disagree with a call, they are just trying to make the sport fair and give you something to improve on.

If you are interested in offering a devotion or performing the National Anthem before the start of one of the sessions, you may volunteer by submitting an application by July 26. Find the form here:

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/DisplayPage.asp?EntryID=2727&Cat=2018LC>

For more information, check out the YMCA Long Course National Championship Handbook at

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/nats/2018LC/2018YMCAlongCourseNationalChampionshipHandbook.pdf>